

From: Jerry Prather
To: microsoft.atr(a)usdoj.gov
Date: 1/23/02 3:55pm
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

Dear Sirs:

I do not agree with the terms of this settlement. Microsoft has properly been found guilty of being an illegal monopoly and they are to atone by giving away old computers and software that will further lock our children into their monopoly? That hardly sounds like a punishment to me.

I've heard it argued that no damage has been done to consumers. I represent at least one case where damage has been done by Microsoft's actions. I was a PC user back in the old DOS days and owned many DOS software packages. When Windows 3.1 came out, I started upgrading my old applications, because I accepted Microsoft's marketing that this was the wave of the future and things would be better. The Windows applications were a disaster compared to the old DOS applications. I'm talking about less stability, slower operation, and altogether a poorer product. I tossed the new stuff and went on using the tried-and-true DOS applications. Hence, I was damaged to the amount of that software by Microsoft.

I next learned about OS/2 (Version 2.1) put out by IBM. As advertised, it was a better DOS than DOS and a better Windows than Windows. Native OS/2 applications were superb in performance. Even in these early days, operating system stability was much better in OS/2 than in Windows. And OS/2 could truly multi-task - a feature I use constantly - and was multi-threaded to boot. (Currently my system reports 28 processes and 136 threads running at the same time.)

But, except for some hard-headed people like me that insist that their operating system deliver speedy, reliable, non-crashing service, OS/2 is hard to find. OS/2 was driven out of the market by Microsoft's pre-load agreements with the major computer manufacturers. Even the small computer shops have been lured into Microsoft's camp by being assured that their sales people and technicians only have to learn one operating system.

How am I hurt by this? First, because of Microsoft's monopoly, it's become uneconomic to develop native software

for OS/2. I much prefer native OS/2 software, but I find that I have to program what I want that isn't already available - and once I get it working I have no financial incentive to polish the program for commercial or shareware sale. Secondly, the computer hardware industry has taken to building cheap stuff (Windows printers, Windows modems, etc.) which saps the power of the CPU - and, for the reasons stated above, an OS/2 user can't get drivers for the hardware anyway.

Yes, I've personally been hurt by the Microsoft monopoly and the government should take strong, punitive action against Microsoft.

Sincerely,

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"Many religions are worth dying for; none are worth killing for."
- Me, circa 1998

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